

# PCYA Strategic Plan 2007-09

## **Introduction**

Pennsylvania Children and Youth Administrators (PCYA) continue to strategically address the changing needs of children at risk of abuse and neglect and the capacity of the child welfare system to provide quality and timely services. The PCYA Board of Directors reviewed the current strategic plan and updated it by focusing on the key areas that will have a dramatic effect on service delivery such as: mandates; adequate and stable funding; outcome measurement; data collection; and recruitment and retention of qualified staff.

PCYA values proactive collaboration with the Department (DPW) and other stakeholders as the above key areas are being discussed, developed, researched, and eventually implemented.

The strategic plan includes a Mission and Vision, and identifies the top four initiatives on which the Association will focus during the next two years. This report includes the:

1. PCYA Mission Statement
2. PCYA Vision Statement
3. The Two-year Action plan for the 07-09 PCYA Strategic Initiatives

To ensure that the Strategic Plan is being utilized to the fullest extent, the PCYA Board will monitor and revise the progress of the Action Plan at regularly scheduled Board meetings and the PCYA membership is to be included/updated accordingly.

## **Mission Statement**

PCYA is committed to representing county children and youth agencies by providing a statewide structure for collaboration, information exchange and advocacy

## **Vision Statement**

To enhance and strengthen the capacity of public children, youth and family agencies to achieve statewide goals of child safety, child permanency and child and family well-being, PCYA supports the following:

- Implementing excellence in program and policy development and in service delivery;
- Improving efficiency in operations and fiscal strategies;
- Building and sustaining partnerships with private providers, and other county, state and federal government agencies;
- Establishing and retaining a skilled and knowledgeable workforce;
- Raising awareness and educating the public with regard to the child welfare system;
- Creating partnerships among counties which address the complex and changing needs of the child welfare system.

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## PCYA Fiscal Reform

### CURRENT STATE:

All levels of government are facing uncertain funding. These pressures impact the Children & Youth Needs Based Budget process and the availability of funding. Counties are being inundated with unfunded mandates, confusing processes, and constantly changing eligibility criteria that have the effect of increasing county match, costs and liabilities.

The allocation process to access the complex mix of local, state and federal dollars has developed into an uncertain fiscal environment for counties. A large number of counties have been compelled to appeal their certified numbers that include unrealistic estimates of the ability of counties to draw down federal funds.

This situation compromises the ability of county agencies to maintain child safety and best practice as a primary area of focus.

### TWO YEAR GOAL:

1. Counties will receive predictable, sufficient, and guaranteed funding to provide services to children as required by state and federal law.
2. Any regulatory changes that increase costs to the counties will be fully funded, and counties will be held harmless (i.e. no new matching requirement) for a period of not less than 2 fiscal years.
3. The Department of Public Welfare, Office on Children, Youth & Families will work closely with counties through PCYA on any issues that impact funding.

### STAKEHOLDERS:

CCAP/County Commissioners, Juvenile Justice, PCYA and county agencies, DPW/OCYF, JPO, federal and state legislators, HHS, Governor's Office, Private providers, other categoricals on the state county levels and other key stakeholders, including the Juvenile Courts.

### ISSUES:

The following are PCYA's priorities for fy 07-08 & fy 08-09:

1. New statutes/regulations governing reimbursement:
  - a. 100% reimbursement for staff salaries and benefits
  - b. 100% state subsidized adoption payments administered statewide, through SWAN prime contractors.
  - c. Establish an ACT 148 Contingency fund
  - d. Advanced quarterly payments (Act 148) to counties @ 25%, with reconciliation with the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter invoice.
  - e. Advocate for IV-E waiver on PLC

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2. Needs based budgeting:
  - a. The process needs to be consistent & automated and must comply with the Act 30 of 1991 process.
  - b. Mandated services need to be fully funded at the 90/10 ratio.
  - c. The mix of state and federal funds needs to be realistic and obtainable and based on each county's prior history (3 year average).
  - d. All NBB requirements/expectations must be in writing at least 3 months in advance of submission date.
  
3. Funding the Child Welfare System:
 

There needs to be a state/county collaborative process that includes short and long term planning and feasibility studies which includes the use of "pilots" and technical support for counties.

A state automated fiscal system is necessary for this process. (See #2, A, above)
  
4. Fiscal Consultant Position:
 

PCYA will utilize a fiscal consultant to gather and analyze statewide numbers to assess the county impact of new policies, regulations, etc.

## ACTION PLAN:

### Objectives:

Enact new status/regulations governing reimbursement

WHAT	BY WHEN	BY WHOM
1. Maintain Fiscal Committee	implemented ('06)	Chuck C., George K.
2. Meet with CCAP Lobbyist to Develop a strategy to enact Fiscal legislation	January, 2008	develop a Legislation Comm. Chuck S. and Barb
3. Establish legislative representatives as part of fiscal workgroup & utilize legislators to advance PCYA agenda with OCYF/DPW (See Goal #2)		

### Objectives:

Improve the NBP & B Process

WHAT	BY WHEN	BY WHOM
1. Work with OCYF to establish a committee	March ('08)	OCYF & PCYA
2. Utilize the committee to Simplify budget & narrative process	Feb. '08 & annually	OCYF & PCYA
3. Review & revise annually the Budget & narrative		

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## Practice Excellence

### **CURRENT STATE:**

In the current uncertain fiscal environment only evidence-based practices are being supported by OCYF and other funding entities. To maintain funding, counties must demonstrate a clear move toward research based programs and practice as well as be able to show positive outcomes in the areas of safety, permanence and well being for children.

The Pennsylvania Children and Youth Administrators' Association supports practice that complies with CCAP's Children's Policy. Practice should promote family involvement, embody the CASSP principles and support initiatives that develop effective partnerships.

### **TWO-YEAR GOAL:**

Counties will be actively implementing and expanding evidence based programs and practice. Such programs and practice will be presented and discussed at PCYA quarterly meetings during the practice improvement sessions.

The following are the values which local agencies should incorporate into their practice:

**Youth and Family Engagement:** Individuals and families are capable experts on their own lives and in making decisions that support positive change and growth.

**Family focused:** There is inherent strength in the family and children are best served and raised in their own families; services that are provided must be based on the needs of the child and family and assure the safety of family members.

**Community Based:** Communities are resources and strengths which, when recognized and developed, provide concrete support to the child and family.

**Cultural Awareness and Sensitivity:** Our work with children and families demonstrates we value and respect the diversity each family brings.

**Solution focused:** For every challenge there is a solution which is ultimately grounded in family and community strengths.

**Strengths based:** Strengths are what ultimately resolve concerns; and every challenge that family/community member faces presents the opportunity to recognize, value, build upon and use those strengths.

**System Collaboration:** All relevant child-serving partners are involved in the plan of care that best meets the needs of individual children and families and best utilizes their strengths.

### **STAKEHOLDERS:**

Children and families, CCAP, PCYA and Children and Youth Agencies, JPO, MH/MR, D&A, OCYF, providers.

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## ISSUES:

1. Adequate/sustainable funding
2. Laying the foundation for shifts in practice
3. Maintaining the integrity of practices/programs chosen
4. Cross systems partnership

## ACTION PLAN:

<b>WHAT</b>	<b>BY WHEN</b>	<b>BY WHOM</b>
1. Explore options for adequate funding to support evidence-based practice & coordinate with NBP&B process	January 2009	Other categoricals/ state/federal & private funding entities; Coordinate with NBP&B comm.
2. TA & training to counties preparing them for the implementation of evidence-based practice	December 2009	PACWTP/PCYA OCYF
3. Work collaboratively with our cross-system partners to develop evidence-based practices	October 2009	PACWTP/PCYA/ PCCYFS/OCYF

## Data Collection

## CURRENT STATE:

The demand and need for reliable, consistent and comprehensive data has dramatically increased. Efforts to meet this demand have been seriously deficient. Expectations for service outcomes data, while desirable, are not achievable in the current MIS environment.

Child welfare services are a mandate. Funding for such services is becoming increasingly limited. As such, the need to adequately assess program effectiveness and efficiency is paramount. Some counties are left to make critical service delivery decisions with little empirical data.

In addition, through integrated children services planning, counties are being "required" to collaborate, share resources and track outcomes across categorical systems with data sets that are both incompatible and unavailable.

This situation compromises the ability of county agencies to maintain the level and variety of services needed to ensure child safety, well-being and permanence.

## TWO-YEAR GOAL:

1. PCYA will work with OCYF to develop short-term solutions to immediate data needs.

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2. PCYA will be actively engaged with OCYF to develop a long-term, MIS - SACWIS system.

3. Counties will be actively engaged in a planning process aimed at developing a comprehensive data base, capable of providing accurate and sufficient data to analyze service delivery options. This will include the identification of sufficient state/federal funding to support this endeavor.

## STAKEHOLDERS:

CCAP/County Commissioners, PCYA and County Children & Youth agencies, Juvenile Justice and Juvenile Probation Office, AOPC, Mental Health & Mental Retardation, Drug & Alcohol, DPW/OCYF, OHMSAS, federal and state legislators, private providers and other key stakeholders.

## ISSUES:

1. Data elements are defined and consistent among CYAs and other categoricals.
2. Adequate funding to develop and support a comprehensive data system.
3. Complete and thorough involvement of county representatives in all aspects of system development.
4. Among categoricals there must be a capacity to share data.

## ACTION PLAN:

### Objectives:

WHAT	BY WHEN	BY WHOM
1. Work with the Commonwealth on developing a new platform for AFCARS	January 2009	County Team PCYA OCYF
2. Establish a workgroup with program & fiscal representatives and coordinate with OCYF to develop an MIS- SACWIS system	January 2009	County Team PCYA OCYF
3. Establish a PCYA workgroup and coordinate with OCYF to establish a program ability to compare and contrast county programs.	June 2008	County Team PCYA OCYF

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## Staff Recruitment and Retention

### **CURRENT STATE:**

The Pennsylvania Children and Youth Administrators (PCYA) Recruitment and Retention Committee have worked closely with the Department of Public Welfare County Programs Unit, the State Civil Service Commission and the University of Pittsburgh to find ways of enhancing both recruitment and retention of professional casework staff members.

Several things have been accomplished by the State Civil Service Commission. The Research Division has reviewed the current Civil Service Tests for County Caseworker and also developed a video to be used for recruitment. Due to the advocacy of the R & R Committee, a separate video was developed specific to child welfare. The video, filmed by Commonwealth Media Services and produced by the State Civil Service Research Division, has been completed, screened and distributed in April 2005. It has been incorporated into the Charting the Course training and utilized as part of the CWEB recruitment efforts. The video is distributed to statewide CYS agencies, CWEB affiliated universities and on the PACWTP and PCYA web sites.

In March 2007 a template for local recruitment efforts/job fairs was created and distributed to all counties. The statewide Job Fair continues on an annual basis at the March PCYA meetings. The template was a result of the need identified by counties for recruitment efforts within their geographic areas with local universities.

Demographic data is being collected as a result of the work of the R & R Committee to establish a baseline. Research will be conducted to establish the effectiveness of CWEL & CWEB in the training process of new child welfare workers. Since the PACWTP began collecting data, 50% of new hires are either a BSW or MSW. From this baseline, further research will be conducted regarding the impact of education and training on recruitment and retention of staff in public child welfare.

In 2007-2008 in conjunction with CCAP, a pilot is being prepared to evaluate alternatives to Civil Service.

### **TWO YEAR GOAL:**

By the year 2009, there will be:

- A Caseworker II turnover rate under 15%.
- By 2009 we will research the industry standards for vacancy and termination rates to develop strategies to achieve the standard.
- Maintenance of a Caseworker I turnover rate under 25%.
- University of Pittsburgh School of Social Work will lead the research effort to determine the contributing factors for turnover and retention of both Caseworker 1 and 2.

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- In 2008 a baseline of data in the number of new hires with college degrees with coursework and fieldwork or work experience in child welfare will be established; with goals to be determined in the future.
- Evaluate the viability of alternatives to Civil Service.

## STAKEHOLDERS:

State Civil Service Commission; Families; Child Welfare Caseworkers and Supervisors; CCAP/County Commissioners; Courts; Colleges and Universities (especially schools with CWEB programs); Legislators; Taxpayers; Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program (PACWTP); Department of Public Welfare Office of Children, Youth, and Families (OCYF) and County Programs Section.

## ACTION PLAN:

Objective: To recruit and maintain qualified staff for all positions within County Child Welfare.

ACTION	BY WHEN	BY WHOM
Develop strategies to encourage use of County Casework Intern Program and CWEB. Continue to provide feedback to CWEB to improve program.	Ongoing	Recruitment & Retention Committee
Provide student receptions once a year at spring PCYA conference	Ongoing	Recruitment & Retention Comm.
Complete research and develop strategies to address vacancy and turnover rates.	March 2009	Recruitment & Retention Committee
Encourage the utilization of local recruitment by counties Survey CYS administrators annually, using Survey Monkey.	March 2009	Recruitment & Retention Committee
Research child welfare salaries – in Pennsylvania does salary play a critical role in retention?	March 2009	Recruitment & Retention Committee

Revised 010808